

THE STUDY OF MAN

THE NEW ANTHROPOLOGY AND ITS AMBITIONS

The Science of Man in Messianic Dress

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THERE is a New Look in anthropology, that omnibus "science of man." Time was when anthropologists were strange ducks who busied themselves with all the odd bits and ends of human affairs and history that respectable scholars turned up their noses at—the strange tribes of "savages" at the outposts of the world, scraps of pottery and other rubble from the meager remains of past centuries. They measured skulls and sacroiliacs, and ingeniously reconstructed the contacts and peregrinations of peoples long since vanished from the face of the earth. They collected and stored up vast arrays of exotic specimens of the long ago and far away. They theorized, discovering the origins of institutions like the family, or of human culture generally, in one or another ancient people.

ANTHROPOLOGY, a discipline until recently limited to primitive peoples on the periphery of modern civilization, has recently excited some attention by researches and pronouncements indicating an ambition, not merely to study the great centers of civilization, but to act as an authoritative scientific guide on such major problems as international relations, war and peace, and the remaking of Germany and Japan. Here ROBERT ENDLEMAN traces the development of anthropology's new interests and aspirations, and subjects its present claims to some objective analysis. Mr. Endleman received his BA from the University of Toronto, and has done graduate work in anthropology and sociology at the University of Wisconsin and Harvard. Not long ago he spent some time in field research on American Indians in the Southwest United States. He was born in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, in 1923.

Today we find anthropologists bent on a new tack: they are out to save the modern world. They concern themselves with international understanding, with administration of dependent and conquered peoples, with labor-management relations in industry, with racial conflict and strife. This was not an overnight metamorphosis. What brought the change?

THE 19th-century anthropologists—and many well into the 20th—were strongly influenced by the evolutionary hypothesis; they devoted much of their time and energy to pigeon-holing primitive peoples in categories marking the stages in the progress of human society and culture, to culminate in a grand universalist construction showing a direct line of ascent from the ancestral cave man to modern rational man.

With the early 20th century, however, came a reaction against ideas of single origins—of institutions or of culture in general—and single lines of cultural descent. A new historical anthropology sought to retrace the specific cultural history of specific areas of the world, on the basis of the meager evidence available, abandoning the grander efforts of evolutionist anthropology. About the same time, Franz Boas in America inaugurated the detailed factual study of the remnants of the primitive cultures of America, and established the now venerated tradition of "field work" as the *sine qua non* of the anthropologist. He and his students also ushered in the emphasis on the study of cultures as integrated systems, in which the parts have meaningful relations to each other, rather than as simply a collection of isolated traits.

A similar trend emerged in British anthro-

pology in the now well-known works of Bronislaw Malinowski on the natives of a group of islands in Northwest Melanesia, the Trobriands. Malinowski proclaimed himself a "functionalist" anthropologist. "Functionalism" was essentially a more polemical statement of the Boas attitude, that all parts of a culture had to be considered in relation to each other and to the whole of the culture seen as a unit functioning to maintain and reproduce itself. Malinowski carried this further to argue that all studies attempting to reconstruct the past of unrecorded societies are arid and worthless, that we can only study the primitives as they exist today, and that, since all features of their present-day life must have a function, there can be no such thing as a "survival"—a cultural form which once had a function but which no longer has one, and which historical anthropologists had used as clues to the past in their reconstruction of history. Functionalism rather hysterically rejected all historical studies in anthropology, the painstaking work of such men as A. L. Kroeber, Robert Lowie, Edward Sapir, A. V. Kidder, and Leslie Spier—who had given us a limited kind of historical reconstruction—as well as every brand of evolutionism.

Another branch of functionalism arose in England in the work of A. R. Radcliffe-Brown. This more refined version again emphasized the functioning of a present-day ongoing system, as contrasted with problems of historical reconstruction, but insisted less dogmatically on the necessary functional integration of every part of a culture. Consequently, these studies place more emphasis on social organization, systems of sanctions, rudimentary political organization, etc.

ALL these trends contributed to turning the attention of anthropologists from the primitives to the moderns. In America, Margaret Mead, one of Boas's students, was most influential in effecting the change. In the late 20's and early 30's Mead widely popularized much of the basic viewpoint of what we may call the New Anthropology: anthropology with a message, anthropology as the knowledge needed to reform the world.

Trained in the academic psychology of the early 20's, Mead turned to anthropology, under the tutorship of Boas, as the new source of answers to psychological problems. She saw the remaining "primitive" peoples of the world as a fast vanishing and irreplaceable laboratory

for the testing of psychological hypotheses. In an era of heated "heredity-versus-environment" controversy, she became the arch-environmentalist, and set about to demolish large-scale generalizations about human nature by bringing in the evidence about the human nature of people in the remote areas of the world. Mead also took up Boas's concept of culture as a total way of life whose aspects and phases are functionally related and internally consistent to each other, and extended it as the major explanatory tool for all human behavior.

These views were presented mainly in three monographs based on field trips to several South Sea islands. In *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928), she asked whether the storm and stress of adolescence, as familiar in modern America, was an inevitable biological bugaboo of man. The method was to find out if adolescents have the same psychological problems in some totally different culture. Her answer, using the findings on the adolescent girls of Samoa, was that culture makes all the difference. In America, it is a period of psychological upset; in Samoa, it is an easy and accepted transition period of free experimentation without conflicting choices and responsibilities. For Mead this knowledge is not merely academic. It is the knowledge we need to be able to solve our problems; the *raison d'être* of anthropology is now to understand and change ourselves, our own civilization. *Growing Up in New Guinea* (1930) was designed to teach harassed American parents a cross-cultural lesson in child-training. As the anthropological ally of progressive education, a Rousseauian with real rather than imaginary "unspoiled" peoples, Mead stressed that we can learn from an exotic culture what effects various aspects of our way of life have upon the growing child, and try, accordingly, to change the world in which the child grows up.

In *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935), the third in the South Seas series, Mead tried to show that any temperamental differences between the sexes is entirely a product of culture, and has nothing to do with the innate biological equipment of men and women. This is neatly accomplished by finding, close to each other in New Guinea, three primitive tribes in which the temperamental distinctions are different from those of Western civilization, as well as from each other. In Arapesh, both men and women are gentle, unaggressive, "feminine," mothering; in Mundugumor, both are aggressive, violent, more "masculine"

by our standards; while the Tchambuli women are aggressive, violent, hostile, the Tchambuli men gentle, passive, unaggressive—Americans in reverse, as it were.

MARGARET MEAD has become American anthropology's chief emissary to the Western World, applying herself directly to the problems of child-rearing, adolescence, and sex differences which she had raised in these popular monographs, in such later works as *And Keep Your Powder Dry*, and scores of articles. But perhaps the most direct and solid link between anthropology as the study of the exotic primitive and anthropology and as the tool with which to attack the problems of modern society, was forged by another female student of Boas, the late Ruth Benedict.

Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934) extended the Boas conception of culture as a meaningful, integrated unit to include the idea of a central pattern of psychology as characteristic of a culture, a pattern creating a distinct and unique flavor or ethos for each culture. She illustrated her theme by showing several vastly different primitive cultures each of which is (according to her portrayal) highly integrated around a particular way of looking at and feeling about the world; thus most of the Pueblo Indians are "Appollonian"—a "middle way"—in everything they do, while most of the Plains Indians are "Dionysian"—given to exotic extremes; the Kwakiutl of British Columbia are megalomaniac, and the Dobuans (neighbors of the Trobrianders in Melanesia) are paranoid to an amazing degree.

Coming into anthropology at a mature age from a literary career, Benedict brought an approach strongly influenced by Nietzsche and Spengler, and evidently by the German idealistic and intuitionistic tradition in general. Her conception of an over-all "pattern" of a culture is hardly more than a crude formulation of the *Geist* with which the German historians of the idealist tradition characterized a particular historical epoch. Benedict's anthropological relativism, in which there are no broad human generalizations, for each people is essentially distinctive and unique, is directly analogous to the historical relativism of these historians, except that she focuses on variations in space rather than in time, and emphasizes the multitude of primitive cultures discovered by anthropologists of a century past, rather than the large-scale civilizations of the world. This rela-

tivism focuses attention on the intensive study of the unique and individual. For the idealistic historian, it meant, besides the painstaking examination of the voluminous masses of documents of a civilization, the application of "understanding" (*Verstehen*), i.e. penetrating the essence of an epoch or a civilization by getting an intuitive "feeling" for its way of life; this was the great distinguishing feature of the disciplines of man and society (*Geisteswissenschaften*) as compared with the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*). For the present-day anthropologist, the study of the unique and individual means "field work," an immediate and contemporary contact with the remnants of the primitives of the world, with practically no time depth whatsoever, for the past of these peoples is almost completely and irrevocably lost.

SO WE have the New Anthropology. Ethnology—historical reconstruction of the movements of the unrecorded peoples of the past, and generalizations about culture processes from these—is increasingly de-emphasized in the new generation of American anthropologists. Ethnography, i.e., just plain factual reporting (the Bella-Bella do this, the Bella-Kula do that), which has always been central to a discipline whose main subject matter has been disappearing from the earth more rapidly than investigators can get out to look at it, is also less emphasized today. The New Anthropology of Mead and Benedict and their followers has increasingly stressed the need for interpretive and theoretical approaches. An intuitionism, a watered-down *Verstehen* approach, is the end-product of Boas's emphasis on the integration of culture, and has become the most prominent feature in this anthropology's outlook on the world.

The latest stage has seen Mead and Benedict and other anthropologists—Geoffrey Gorer, Gregory Bateson, Clyde Kluckhohn, Ralph Linton, A. I. Hallowell, Weston La Barre, Cora Du Bois and others, with the help of psychiatrists like Abram Kardiner, Alexander and Dorothea Leighton, and Erik Homburger Erikson—combining Mead's emphasis on the patterns of child-rearing with Benedict's emphasis on "cultural ethos," and directing their efforts to exploring the relationships between these two.

With this outlook anthropology has staged a return from the native. For if the culture

concept and its newer derivatives revolving around the cultural ethos and the "modal" or "basic" personality (created by certain forms of child-rearing) have been such master tools in understanding the myriad exotic peoples of the world (the argument runs) why not turn back and apply them to the major civilizations of the contemporary world? In this new view, differences between peoples, the differences that lead to friction, hatred, violence and war, can be understood in large part as differences of culture, differences of ethos, of world view, and if only we can understand these differences, we can more easily move toward a solution of the problems of a troubled world.

This is a bold and sweeping claim, but it has been advanced in one form or another by leading anthropologists of the present generation.

Besides the anthropological works on community studies, race relations, industry, and colonial administration,* the significant work of anthropologists on modern life includes two sweeping essays on the American character by Margaret Mead and a British disciple, Geoffrey Gorer; studies of the Japanese by Benedict, Gorer, and LaBarre; anthropological work on *Postwar Germans* by David Rodnick. The rest of the nations of the world are now gradually being surveyed by anthropologists, with funds

*The community study approach, as used by W. Lloyd Warner and associates on Yankee City, and other small towns in the South and the Midwest, applies an anthropological method by treating a modern community either as though it were a complete self-contained society, or as though it were a microcosm of the larger industrial society. "Industrial anthropology"—the works of Whyte, Warner, Roethlisberger and many others—seeks to elucidate the differing cultural premises of managerial and worker groups, the lines of informal organization, and the failures of communications (hence of "understanding"). For critical analyses, see Daniel Bell, "Adjusting Men to Machines," *COMMENTARY*, January 1947; also Herbert Blumer, "Sociological Theory in Industrial Relations," *American Sociological Review*, June 1947; and Wilbert E. Moore, "Industrial Sociology—Status and Prospects," *American Sociological Review*, August 1948. The approach here is paralleled by that proposed by anthropologists in colonial administration: to study the culture of the subordinate peoples and to recognize and solve difficulties in understanding involved in implementing any given policy. Alexander Leighton's *The Governing of Men* employs fundamentally this position in studying the Japanese in American wartime concentration camps. See critique by Nathan Glazer, "Government by Manipulation," *COMMENTARY*, July 1946.

supplied by foundations and defense agencies. The Russian Research Center at Harvard is at work on Russian character and a group at Columbia headed first by Benedict, and since by Mead, has been studying the national character of various European groups, including the Jews.

MARGARET MEAD's *And Keep Your Powder Dry* (New York, Morrow, 1942) and Geoffrey Gorer's *The American People* (New York, Norton, 1948) are related in background and conception. Mead's book was a quickly written (six weeks) bit of wartime propaganda intended to elucidate the psychological background of the American way of life as it bore upon the pursuit of the war. She makes sweeping generalizations about the kind of family background typical Americans have—finding us all psychologically third-generation—and explicitly or implicitly assumes that most if not all Americans closely approximate the conditions and character features she describes, regardless of class, caste, ethnic extraction, regional or rural-urban differentiation, occupation, or any number of other social, economic, or political criteria for differentiation. Gorer's work is also severely vitiated by this kind of unabashed impressionism, drawing its material from informal travel in America, a study of movie themes, a case study of a schizophrenic, and personal contacts with American intellectuals at Yale, Columbia, and elsewhere. In both cases there is a distinct but unacknowledged Eastern-urbanite upper-middle-class bias which makes the broad generalizations of the authors scientifically suspect, to say the least.

Each tries to capture essential features of the ethos of the American people. For example, Mead tries to analyze American ethics of fighting by noting how the male child is taught that physical aggression is justified only on provocation from the outside, and then is positively exhorted. This, it appears, explains why America had to wait until Pearl Harbor before it could in all conscience fight the recent war. Gorer resorts to similar explanations: American food-anxieties, instilled in childhood not by actual alimentary want, but by parental complexes about feeding, "explain" why Americans resisted large-scale shipments of food to starving Europe during the early stages of the Marshall Plan; or the second-generation rejection of paternal authority "explains" the "fanatical hatred of Roosevelt and the New Deal among the most respected Americans."

Gorer has inevitably become the scapegoat for all manner of critics of this phase of the New Anthropology, including a defensive rejecting reaction by the more orthodox anthropologists themselves. Yet his extravagances are only extreme cases of a general trend. In his paper on Japanese character structure prepared for the War Department during the war ("Themes in Japanese Culture," *Transactions, New York Academy of Sciences*, Series II, Vol. 5, reprinted in Douglas Haring, ed., *Personal Character and Cultural Milieu, a Collection of Readings*, Syracuse University Press, 1948), he went so far as to attribute compulsiveness, sadism, and many other oddities and contradictions of the Japanese to severe toilet training. Similarly, the Japanese attack on Manila, which Gorer asserts emphasized cultural rather than military objectives, is partially "explained" by the analogy of the Japanese boy aggressively destroying his mother's elaborate hairdo whenever she is especially "weak" and "feminine" toward him. In this interesting thesis, the "feminine" American war record of early 1942 provoked this "masculine" Japanese response. (Gorer is undisturbed by criticism, as is evident from his recent interpretation of the Soviet Union in terms of the practice of swaddling!)

Other anthropologists who undertook to analyze modern Japan in the fever and rush of wartime assignments, without the benefit of the sacred anthropological field trip, have produced similar sweeping obiter dicta. Weston LaBarre emphasizes even more than Gorer an element of anal eroticism in the modern Japanese, responsible for a pervading compulsiveness in all social relations and an obsessive concern with status and rank. Similarly, in discussing the Chinese, LaBarre traces the acceptance by the Chinese of American intermediaries in the war against Japan to the Chinese pattern of using middlemen in arranging marriages ("Observations on the Orient," *Psychiatry*, 1946).

Again on Japan, Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946) was an attempt to apply her conception of all-pervading patterns to modern Japan and elucidate the major features of the Japanese ethos. She is particularly concerned with their conceptions of ethics, and devotes most of her volume to the complexities of formalized and less formalized patterns of obligations which, by her account, pervade all Japanese life, and with the other major pre-occupation of the Japanese, that of

"finding one's proper place." Working under wartime handicaps, Benedict applied her intuitive approach to translated documentary materials, movies, the few historical works available in European languages she could handle, and interviews with Issei and Nissei interned in America. She seems to have been easily taken in by official Japanese propaganda, particularly on anything touching international politics and war. For example, she naively parrots official pronouncements to the effect that Japan's colonial expansion and her part in the recent war were merely part of her attempt to "find her proper place among the nations." It is one thing to use this document as a case example in the methods of Japanese war propaganda, noting the psychological assumptions behind the use of such a technique. It is quite another to accept this, as Benedict does, as an explanation of why Japan went to war!

ONE might well dismiss the anthropological character-structure approaches to modern nations as simply political naivety stemming from the treatment of large-scale societies as though they were small unindustrialized and cohesive tribal or folk populations. However, this is no mere academic oddity of misinterpretation. It takes on serious political relevance when it is presented as a mode of dealing with international affairs. This is done in all solemnity and with the stamp of professional erudition in Clyde Kluckhohn's prize-winning *Mirror for Man* (New York, Whittlesey House, 1949).

This book is in effect a manifesto of the New Anthropology, a science self-consciously announcing itself as mature and responsible. It has the merits of broad and sensitive scholarship uncluttered by compulsive academic qualifications, footnotes, and references, at the same time that it scorns the condescending oversimplification so characteristic of most "science for the marketplace." Significant sections of it bear directly—and more articulately than in the writings of possibly any other American anthropologist—on the relation of anthropology to modern affairs.

While Kluckhohn is defensively aware of some of the excesses committed by Mead and Gorer, and honestly confesses his own sketch on American culture to be "only a shade beyond impressionism," he is still no better able than the others to avoid the basic kind of simplification in political thinking to which the

very premises of the New Anthropology are almost bound to lead. For example, here is the theme of anthropology's contribution to world peace—war can be prevented if only we can increase understanding between peoples:

"The shrinking of the world makes mutual understanding and respect on the part of the peoples of the world imperative. . . . [As between the Soviet Union and the Western democracies] . . . even now there is common ground which could well be brought nearer the center of bitter political discussion. For example both the American people and the peoples of the Soviet Union are remarkable among the nations of the world for their faith in man's capacity to manipulate his environment and control his fate."

Such pronouncements reveal the fundamental fallacies of the approach. It is politically naive to assume that underlying differences or similarities of *world-view* between whole politically-organized populations are the root cause for conflict or the prevention of it. The emphasis, particularly in American anthropology, on culture as the master analytic rubric, has led here to a systematic neglect of systems of social organization, group differentiations, significant hierarchical relationships, conflicting economic and political interests, and, very crucially for the present case, the way governments gain and exercise their powers. Such a concentration on culture incapacitates the thinker for any analysis of the amenability of a social system to certain major types of change, not merely in personnel, but in essential structure. Though all these politically important features are *theoretically* within the purview of the cultural anthropologist, in point of fact they are flagrantly neglected or distorted.

In effect, the complex of a nation's institutions is reduced to a cultural abstraction. Oddly enough, this permits anthropologists to consider change and reconstruction either deceptively easy or impossibly hazardous. On the one hand, one is told one need only root out one cultural pattern—such as strict toilet training—to transform the political character of a nation. On the other hand, one is warned that apparently minor changes may have the most devastating and far-reaching effects.

The New Anthropology falsely exaggerates and distorts the relevance of the thinking and feeling of the populations of modern states to the making of war or peace. It seems to swallow whole the American democratic mythology

that the opinions of the individuals of a society are added up to determine their political destinies—and then applies this not only to America but also to totalitarian states! It also assumes that power politics—not to mention economic ramifications—is only "one aspect among many" in international conflict, instead of being the crucial point at which the balance is ever tipped between peace and war. One need only inquire about concrete techniques of communicating with the masses of the Soviet states, in an effort to bring them the anthropological light of how much we have in common, to be faced abruptly with the role of power structure in the modern world. The anthropologists might take note of Harold Lasswell's terse reminder, in his recent *Power and Personality* (Norton, 1948):

"Now you and I may dissent from the conception of an inevitable war. But what if we do? . . . There is no simple method by which power holders in the name of this particular myth can be quickly reached and persuaded of error. Mr. Stalin and the Politburo are not coming to seminars in history, political science, and psychology conducted by a 'bourgeois' scholar."

TO BE sure, a consideration of the ethos of a people and of their character structure is not entirely irrelevant for understanding modern populations, nor is a "holistic" (all-embracing and unifying) view of a people impossible to achieve. Undeniably, the psychological backgrounds of political behavior are a significant field for present-day researches. But, as currently practiced, anthropological (and psychiatric) impressionism reveals itself as woefully inadequate for the task.

The scope of this inadequacy may be gauged by reviewing the intellectual orientations of the New Anthropology. Prominent is the neglect and often profound ignorance of history. Derived originally from the necessity of immediate studies of unrecorded and disappearing peoples, this approach has been fantastically carried over into areas where documentary records and a considerable body of scholarship exist. Another obvious error is the neglect of factors of power and prestige stratification: it is here that the most fruitful work could be done, by breaking down emotional and ideological backgrounds in terms of *who* feels how and *who* thinks what, and by measuring the political incidence of such differentiations.

Also relevant is the essentially *American* quality of the New Anthropology. This has meant the predominance of "culture patterns," "themes," personality studies, and impressionistic generalizations about culture, in contrast, for example, to current British anthropology, which is mainly social anthropology in the Radcliffe-Brown tradition, interested primarily in comparative social systems and not in personality structures. It is interesting to observe that the two major British proponents of the New Anthropology—Gregory Bateson and Geoffrey Gorer—have both been attracted to America, and that neither has been involved in standard British anthropology studies. One might also note Malinowski's coming to America in his last years, as being consistent with his greater emphasis on culture and its necessary integration, rather than on social organization and differentiation: a case in point is his last work, *Dynamics of Culture Change*, where he handles the problems of African native workers in British-controlled mining areas as a question of the meeting of two cultures, and the development of a third new one at the point of contact. This emphasis—the typical point of departure of anthropological studies in acculturation—obscures an essential feature of the situation, that of domination and exploitation of a politically subordinate people by techniques of economic power familiar throughout the world.

We may ask whether the American democratic mythos has not influenced the New Anthropology, not only in its conceptions of political ideology, but also in a general predisposition to portray a homogeneous and uniform mentality and psychology for an entire social group. It would be rather ironic if anthropologists, who have proclaimed so loudly the detached approach—the cultural relativism and freedom from all preconceptions—that they bring to the study of their own culture on the basis of having studied other cultures, had been unwittingly victimized by the American mythology of classlessness in their approach to the modern world and primitive cultures as well.

THE anthropologists' return from the primitive is in part an outcome of a concern with general human values that has become a widespread phenomenon in contemporary social studies, particularly since the advent of the Bomb. The phase of crass positivistic empiricism in sociology is beginning to give way.

With its global concerns, the New Anthropology is prominent in this tendency. This is a significant change from the *Patterns of Culture* period, a scant fifteen years ago. Benedict's approach left the anthropologists with an almost complete ethical, as well as anthropological, relativism: the "good" and the "normal" were left to be defined each only in the context of its own culture. To the New Anthropologists—as to social thinkers of various disciplines—this is an unbearable situation, and we are witnessing a stampede in the direction of some solid foundation of life and thought, some kind of ultimate values.

In the New Anthropology, the universal breadth of knowledge acquired by the science of man is now applied, not, as in *Patterns of Culture*, for an iconoclastic shattering of our own ethnocentric ethical conceptions, but rather as the source from which we may scientifically derive ultimate values themselves. This position is most consciously delineated by Kluckhohn in *Mirror for Man*. The argument is roughly as follows: The diversity of culture is not really infinite, as earlier anthropologists thought. Some values are found in all known cultures. These, to be sure, are very broad, and some are only negatively formulated, e.g., no known culture has ever valued human suffering as an end in itself. Nevertheless (the argument runs), since some values have been empirically discovered in every known culture, there must be some pan-human logic in them, which makes them an imperative for all human existence. These then must be universal values, ethical absolutes, which no society, no culture that we might try to shape for ourselves through rational action, can afford to neglect.

In this case, an admirable humanistic concern has led to intellectual confusion. No one will deplore the appearance of ethical philosophers, no matter how unlikely the field in which they appear, or say they have nothing to offer us. But the ethical pronouncements of sociologists, psychoanalysts, poets, historians, or anthropologists, cannot be paraded as "science." It is one thing to persuade men to use the best of our contemporary knowledge about mankind in thinking about ethics. It is quite another to assert that our empirical knowledge of values can provide us with the ethics itself, in any simple, wholesale, *scientifically authoritative* way. In any case, empirically universal values derived by anthropologists, are likely to be so broad that they can rarely hope to be relevant in

any concrete political or ethical situation. We may grant as an anthropological generalization that in every society there is always some form of normatively sanctioned sexual relationship; but this generalization cannot tell us which form to choose for any particular society.

The political-ethical view the anthropologists propound is essentially Western-European humanism deriving mainly from the Enlightenment, and broadened by the kind of tolerance for differences developed by the anthropologist in living among his favorite exotic folk society. For all the talk of ultimate values, the most important values they recognize are not universal at all, but are rather those of the anthropologists' particular subvariety of our own Western culture. Scientific honesty should compel the recognition that these are *our* values, and that we can hardly expect them to be shared unless our goal is something like a Pax Americana in which we are really trying to make over the world in our own image.

AN ANTHROPOLOGISTS reviewing Stuart Chase's uncritical and laudatory book on the social sciences, *The Proper Study of Mankind*, says that "Mr. Chase is less naive, but still reminiscent of the prominent physician who acknowledged in wistful seriousness an introduction to an anthropologist: 'Ah yes! You are an anthropologist—one of the only group of men who might be trusted with power to rule!'" Though cited in this case with tongue in cheek, it would not be hard to find anthropologists—and sociologists, social psychologists, and social psychiatrists of various persuasions—who agreed wholeheartedly with this image of themselves.

We may well ask what is the actual and prospective role of the New Anthropology in the present world of affairs? Certainly many anthropologists of the new dispensation are already at the disposal of governments and non-governmental bodies, in the capacity of "experts," along with the legal, economic, statistical, and sociological technicians. As though intoxicated by their new proximity to, and supposed influence on, social power, these academicians now inflate their chests and claim to have—now or ultimately—the answers for all manner of problems ranging from railway coach seats designed to accommodate every conceivable type of human bottom, to the preservation of international peace.

This self-congratulation, however, is very largely *intra academia*, and it would be foolish

to conclude that the social scientists' articulateness about their role in political affairs coincides with the actual influence they wield. Distrust of the "longhairs" by practical politicians is inherent in the very nature of political action, which cannot tolerate to be sicklied o'er by the pale cast of thought, and which often finds the "rational" solution politically inexpedient. To date, the practical political influence of the anthropologists (and a few other politicized branches of social science) has consisted of a somewhat awe-inspiring ability to extract large sums of money from the armed forces and related sources to continue more or less the same kind of research we have here described. It is most unlikely that Gorer's speculations on Russian character will be more useful than his speculations on the Japanese.

In all probability, then, the appearance of scholars in the world of politics augurs neither the panacea for all our ills that many expect, nor, on the other hand, any worse bungling of international affairs. It is probably more rewarding to view the New Anthropology itself, and the acceptance of its scientific claims in many sectors of American society, as an intriguing feature of current American culture and ideology. What is the function of its particular mythological view of the world, as compared with other current myths and folklore? To whom does the mythology appeal, what interests does it serve, what underlying sentiments does it set aglow, what anxieties allay? Would it not be proper to set one or two of the more intelligent New Anthropologists to work on the New Anthropology itself?

I do not argue that anthropological knowledge is worthless in understanding man and society, but that it is knowledge of a special sort, with its own special lacunae and blind-spots as well as advantages. It is not a substitute for, but must be brought into active collaboration with, the other social disciplines, especially where these have been concerned with problems of power, social organization, and change. Those who are sincerely concerned with mustering knowledge toward the solution of world problems, face the imposing necessity of discriminating the relative pertinence of different kinds of approaches, of different kinds of collaborations, for the illumination of specific kinds of problems. This also implies a humble and honest recognition of the inadequacy of the present state of our understanding of man and society.